

Alison Schmalz

From: Jeff Hornby [hornby@sd5.k12.mt.us]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 11:46 AM
To: 'alison & paul schmalz'; 'Alison Schmalz'
Subject: Quote for bully prevention

Alison,

I am not sure how to summarize the importance Olweus has had in our school other than by saying it really is our entire approach to dealing with disciplinary issues but more importantly it has provided students with strategies to deal with frustrations, recognize inappropriate behavior and taught them how to better cooperate with each other. It has greatly impacted our staff approach as we work with students each day. The staff is more proactive as they recognize potential issues and through class meetings they get the pulse of the students' feelings, frustrations, and feedback that demonstrates a genuine concern for social and academic improvement for each student. As I look at our office referral data, I notice a few points:

1. Due to a transient student population, we generally have 1/3 of the student body new each year. Looking particularly at this year, we had a very high number of students engaged in physical and verbal bullying. Our staff addressed those students and the issues and those numbers declined drastically to levels even less than in years past. I found that only five of those students involved in these bully behaviors were students who attended our school last year. Physical bullying over the past four months is actually at a four year low for each month, despite having the highest September of physical bullying. Our staff did a great job of addressing these issues.
2. We use a leveled behavior scale that is easy for all students to understand. This was created through our bully prevention program.
3. This year, our bully prevention shirts have a "Superman" style letter "G" on the front. The purpose of this was to take our education beyond our classrooms. We would like all Elrod students to be known around Kalispell as "Super Gs." The Super G refers to the G on the bully circle. The letter A represents the bully, B represents the bully's Henchmen, C represents those who might stand around, laugh and encourage the bully behavior, D and E are those students who don't know what to do when they see bully behavior and may either just watch or walk away without helping the situation, F wants to help, but doesn't know what to do and G is the person who will step in and tell the person exhibiting the bully behavior that what he/she is doing is not right or will help the target (victim) get out of the situation. The Super G is the great defender against bully behavior and demonstrates support for those who may be mistreated. Our goal is to empower the bystanders to encourage appropriate behavior. Our data shows that this does happen as we see the incidents of bullying decline as each year goes on. Of course, we do see spikes from year to year, but on the whole incidents do decrease.
4. My biggest concern is that we are addressing issues at our site based on the Olweus training, but we have to train so many students at the beginning of each year as they often come into our school from a school that may not have anything in place to address these issues. Our state needs to support these efforts in every district. It would be my recommendation that all schools use common language so transition issues from one school to another would be minimal.

Hopefully the following data will come out in such a way that you can still read it. If not let me know.

2005-2006	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May	June	Total
Verbal Bullying	1	5	4	4	9	5	5	1	7	2	43
Physical Bullying	4	5	2	3	7	6	6	6	13	4	56
General Misbehavior	12	27	17	17	29	45	20	23	39	5	234
	17	37	23	24	45	56	31	30	59	11	333
2006-2007	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May	June	Total
Verbal Bullying	4	3	5	4	8	9	14	1	9	1	65